

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-12, and 14-21 are pending in the application. By this amendment claims 1, 7, 8, 10-12, 14-20 are amended, claims 3, 6 and 21 are cancelled and claim 22 has been added. Thus, claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10-12, 14-20 and 22 are submitted for reconsideration. Claims 1 and 18 are independent claims. No new matter has been added to the application.

Pursuant to the Decision on Appeal dated November 6, 2003, claims 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10-12, 14-17, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph. Applicant has amended claims 1, 12, 17 and 18 to correct the indefiniteness issues identified by the Appeal Board as set forth following.

Claims 1 and 18 have been amended to remove the limitation directed to the means for releasably coupling one of the circular blades to a drive unit having a motor. Thus, claims 1 and 18 no longer recite the means-plus-function language describing the releasable coupler that was the basis for the indefiniteness rejection of claims 1 and 18 under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph.

Applicant has cancelled claim 6, thus, the indefiniteness thereof is moot.

Claims 12 and 17 have been amended to clarify the description of the plane of the flat material referred to in the claim language.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that all of the pending claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10-12, 14-20 and 22 now comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Additionally, claim 7 has been amended to correctly identify the means for establishing and adjusting a cutting gap between the two circular blades that is further limited by claim 7.

Claims 8, 10-12, 14, 15 and 17 have been amended to include the term "about" to more accurately describe the approximate ranges of values identified in the claims.

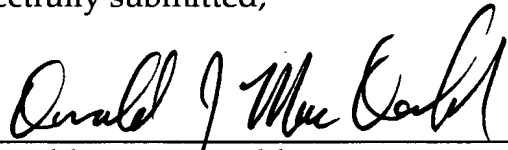
Claims 18-20 have been amended to clarify the claim language describing the apparatus of the invention wherein a plurality of circular cutting units are slidably mounted on a plurality of parallel guide rails.

New claim 22 has been added to further describe the apparatus of claim 18 by including a limitation directed to the drive motor.

Applicant submits that, based on the Decision on Appeal of November 6, 2003 and the amendments submitted herein, claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10-12, 14-20 and 22 are now in allowable condition and this action is respectfully requested.

Applicant has enclosed a check in the amount of \$770 for the continued examination. Applicant believes no additional fees are due; however, if an additional fee is due please charge Deposit Account 13-0235.

Respectfully submitted,

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